2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izinduna* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izinduna* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They